

sending ministers to visit northern churches and donors.<sup>72</sup>

It is unknown what path local church leaders followed in the months following the riot but the national A .M. E. Zion church, led by men such as North Carolina's Bishop James Walker Hood, sought to bridge the gap between opposing viewpoints within the church as to how African Americans should deal with the "race question." At one extreme was Booker T. Washington who preached temporary surrender of voting and civil rights in favor of educational improvement. Opposing Washington were others such as Timothy T. Fortune who pressed for nothing less than full equality for blacks and justice for those who had been hurt by white mobs. The A.M.E. Zion church chose to encourage a middle-of-the-road path – encouraging education, economic prosperity and dedication to a long-term goal of equality and unlimited freedoms for blacks.<sup>73</sup>

Although several ministers had been targeted to leave the city as a result of their active participation in Republican Party politics, many remained. Of these some likely took a less conspicuous position in political debate or sought to adopt a stance considered less militant in the eyes of whites. In 1915 the ministerial union, which was dissolved in 1898, was re-formed. The new union followed the example set by the earlier group and sought methods to organize the city's churches in order to

provide leadership to the community in all matters, religious and civic.<sup>74</sup>

A study of the leading churches in the city, based upon the 1897, 1900 and 1903 city directories, shows that most of the city's African American church congregations survived the violence and continued to function in various sectors of the city.<sup>75</sup> Only one congregation in the city – St. Thomas Catholic Church – was racially integrated in the years surrounding the violence. However, the white members of the congregation turned the church over to its black members in 1911 when the new St. Mary Church was completed.<sup>76</sup> Some

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<sup>74</sup> The ministerial union was dissolved after the coup and violence of 1898 because it was perceived by white leaders that the ministers who participated in the union worked to develop Republican Party backing within their congregations as well as to organize a united, and potentially armed, resistance to the white supremacy campaign. As evidence, white leaders pointed to the ministerial union's public support of Alex Manly as well as the fact that several ministers were also leading members of the county's Republican Party. For more on the ministerial union's involvement in pre-election matters, see Chapter 4. Reaves, *Strength Through Struggle*, 143.

<sup>75</sup> Andrew Kraft studied Wilmington's churches in his geographic study of the city. Two of his maps charted the city's white and black churches using the 1897 and 1903 city directories. Comparison of his maps indicated that some African American churches, found in the 1897 city directory either moved or were displaced by white churches by 1903. However, study of the lists of churches in the city shows that he incorrectly identified two churches, St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church and the Fifth Street Methodist Episcopal Church as African American churches when, in fact, they were white churches. A new comparison of the city's churches before and after the violence of 1898 using the city directories, Sanborn maps and Reaves, *Strength Through Struggle* shows that although some churches went through some reorganization and name changes following 1898, the locations and basic religious framework established before 1898 remained in place following the violence. See chapter 1 map of African American churches.

<sup>76</sup> Reaves, *Strength Through Struggle*, 121 – 122; Wrenn, *Wilmington, North Carolina: An Architectural and Historical Portrait*, 224-227.

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<sup>72</sup> In 1899 Mt. Olive was undergoing remodeling. In 1901, St. Mark's raised funds for its programs and for repairs to the chancel and rectory through a presentation of a melodrama at the Opera House and by sponsoring a trip by its pastor to Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New Jersey. Reaves, *Strength Through Struggle*, 112, 134.

<sup>73</sup> Bishop William J. Walls, *The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church: Reality of the Black Church*, (Charlotte, N.C. : A. M. E. Zion Publishing House, 1974), 507-511.